

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this application in view of the above amendments and the following remarks is respectfully requested.

Claims 12-22 are pending in this application. Claims 15-22 are withdrawn from consideration. By this amendment, Claim 13 is amended; and no claims are canceled or added herewith. It is respectfully submitted that no new matter is added by this amendment.

In the Outstanding Office Action, Claims 12-14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as anticipated by JP 2003-62832 to Seko; and Claims 13-14 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as unpatentable over Seko in view of JP 49024286 to Babel.

Applicants appreciate the courtesies extended to Applicants representative during the personal interview held July 29, 2009. Applicant's statement of substance of the personal interview is incorporated into the above amendments and following remarks.

It is respectfully submitted the applied art does not teach or suggest that after the vulcanization processing, the bladder removes the vulcanized tire from the vulcanization position to the delivery position and contracting the bladder at the delivery position for releasing the vulcanized tire from the bladder, as recited in Claim 12.

In contrast, Seko discusses in paragraph [0039] that after the completion of the vulcanization, the bladder is contracted, but does not work to remove the finished vulcanized tire from the upper mold, lower mold and bladder centering mechanism. The finished vulcanized tire is removed from the vulcanization position by using a transport device (not shown). That is, in Seko, the transport device has to grip the easy-to-deform finished vulcanized tire in the lower mold and has to take it out of the lower mold. At this time, it is substantially impossible for the transport device to hold or hug the outer circumferential surface of the easy-to-deform finished vulcanized tire in the lower mold and thus, has to grip a bead ring on an upper side of the tire. The transportation of the easy-to-deform finished

vulcanized tire with the bead ring gripped by the transport device would result in a deformation of the tire, or a special transport device would be required to grip both of bead rings on upper and lower sides of the easy-to-deform finished vulcanized tire or to hold or hug the outer circumferential surface of the easy-to-deform finished vulcanized tire which is surrounded by the lower mold at the vulcanization position.

According to the features of one or more embodiments of the present invention, it becomes possible to remove the vulcanized tire from the vulcanization position to the delivery position without deforming the vulcanized tire. As well known in the art, the vulcanized tire at the vulcanization position is still easy to deform, and therefore, the removal of the vulcanized tire from the vulcanization position has to be careful until it is fixed by being subjected to a post cure inflation processing which follows the vulcanizing processing. One or more examples of the present invention enable the bladder to move the vulcanized tire from the vulcanization position to the delivery position where it becomes easy for a handling device to hold or hug the outer circumferential surface of the easy-to-deform vulcanized tire just removed from the vulcanization position. Thus, it can be realized for the handling device to transfer the easy-to-deform vulcanized tire from the delivery position to a next step such as, for example, a post cure inflation processing without deforming the easy-to-deform vulcanized tire.

Further, the applied art does not teach or suggest making a single centering shaft pass through centers of the lower mold, the upper mold, the green tire, the bladder and the pair of bladder operating sleeves during a vulcanization by extending the single centering shaft from the upper mold into the pair of bladder operating sleeves, as recited in Claim 13.

Seko does not disclose a single centering shaft as recited. Further, Babel also fails to disclose any single centering shaft which is made to pass through the centers of the pair of bladder operating sleeves, as recited in Claim 13. In Babel, no centering shaft is provided

independently of a piston rod 33 and a sleeve 22 which correspond in function to the pair of bladder operating sleeves in Claim 13. As such, Babel does not cure the deficiencies of Seko, and hence, it is believed that Claim 13 is patentable over Seko and Babel either alone or in combination.

In accordance with the features of the claimed invention discussed above, the single centering shaft makes it possible to bring all of the lower mold, the upper mold, the green tire, the bladder and the pair of bladder operating sleeves into axial alignment, so that the uniformity and roundness of the tire can be improved. The features of the claimed invention are not taught by the applied art and therefore the applied art cannot provide at least the advantages discussed above. Claim 14 depends from Claim 13. Therefore, it is believed that Claim 14 is patentable for the same reasons discussed above.

Withdrawal of the rejections of the claims under 35 U.S.C. § 102 and § 103 over Babel and Seko is respectfully requested.

Consequently, for the reasons discussed in detail above, no further issues are believed to be outstanding in the present application, and the present application is believed to be in condition for formal allowance. Therefore, a Notice of Allowance is earnestly solicited.

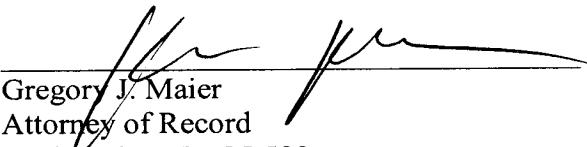
Should the Examiner deem that any further action is necessary to place this application in even better form for allowance, the Examiner is encouraged to contact the undersigned representative at the below listed telephone number.

Respectfully submitted,

OBLON, SPIVAK, McCLELLAND,
MAIER & NEUSTADT, P.C.

Customer Number
22850

Tel: (703) 413-3000
Fax: (703) 413 -2220
(OSMMN 08/07)


Gregory J. Maier
Attorney of Record
Registration No. 25,599

Kevin M. McKinley
Registration No. 43,794

1828163_1.DOC